background information

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CHRISTIAN ACTION IN RAPID SOCIAL CHANGE: DILEMMAS AND OPPORTUNITIES

A Report on the Thessalonica Conference

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A REPORT ON THE THESSALONICA CONFERENCE

The international study conference on Christian Action in Rapid Social Change - Dilemmas and Opportunities, held at Thessalonica, Greece, from July 25 to August 2, 1959, under the auspices of the World Council of Churches, was the latest and perhaps the most important event in the World Council's four year programme on this topic. It was attended by 146 participants, half coming from Africa, Asia, and Latin America, the rest from Europe and North America. The majority (86) were laymen: economists, businessmen, labour leaders, sociologists, educators and political leaders. The conference met at Thessalonica at the invitation of the Church of Greece and the Ecumenical Patriarch of Constantinople and the meeting place at Anatolia College proved to be a very good milieu for these deliberations.

There is not space in a single issue of Background Information to do justice to the many interesting papers, speeches and Bible studies delivered at the conference, and we have selected a sample of these to show the wide range of issues considered.

The chairman of the conference was Prof. E. de Vries who guided the rapid social change study for four years. His opening address on "What Happens to Man in Rapid Social Change?" shows in a very clear way the Christian concern for the impact of rapid social change on man and society.

Each evening the conference met in plenary to hear informational addresses on the problem of Christian responsibility in Africa, Asia and Latin America. One of the most notable of these was delivered by Dr. G. Kiano, a young African political leader from Kenya. His address in slightly shortened form is published here. It is significant that one of the largest groups ever to attend an ecumenical study conference was present from Africa, and their contribution was one of the highlights of the programme.

Dr. Kiano's remarks, especially on the subject of race relations in Africa today, aroused much discussion. Later, two statements on "The Church and the Race Situation in South Africa" were presented to the conference by the Rev. A.W. Meiring, and the Rev. A.W. Blaxall, leaders respectively of the Dutch Reformed Church of South Africa and of the Christian Council of South Africa which includes all other churches. We have included their brief statements to illustrate the range of views presented to the conference on this topic.

Throughout the meeting there was much discussion of the problems of so-called younger churches and missions in meeting the challenge of rapid social change. Dr. Virgil Sly, executive secretary of the United Christian Missionary Society of the U.S.A. (Disciples), one of the veteran missionary leaders of the West, gave an address on The Christian Missions in a Time of Social Change, a major portion of which is included here.

At the close of the conference various participants were invited to evaluate the work of the conference. Prof. Margery Perham, Fellow of Nuffield College, Oxford, and well-known as an authority on British colonial relations, made a statement which we are pleased to present here.

Report of the Conference Findings

The Thessalonica conference did not spend all its time listening and debating. During most of the programme there were meetings of the three working groups into which the gathering was divided. The subjects and officers of these three working groups are as follows:

I. Man in Rapid Social-Cultural Change. -
Chairman: Mr. Korula Jacob, India,
Rapporteur: Prof. K.A. Busia, Ghana,
Secretary: Dr. R.S. Bilheimer, Geneva.

II. Christian Responsibility in Economic Development. -
Chairman: Prof. M. Sumiya, Japan,
Rapporteur: Mr. Henry Makulu, Northern Rhodesia,
Secretary: Mr. Paul Abrecht, Geneva.

III. Christian Responsibility in Political Action. -
Chairman: Dr. Edward Rogers, U.K.,
Rapporteur: Prof. John C. Bennett, U.S.A.,
Secretary: Mr. M.M. Thomas, India.

The findings of these three working groups were discussed in plenary and incorporated into an official report of the conference entitled: Dilemmas and Opportunities: Christian Action in Rapid Social Change, which has now been published. This 104 page report is available from the Department on Church and Society, World Council of Churches, 17 route de Malagnou, Geneva, Switzerland. (The price will be about Swiss Francs 1.50 or equivalent amounts in other currencies plus postage. Special prices can be obtained for orders of ten or more).

There is space here only to summarize the main points of this report.

The report has five sections: Introduction - Part One: Man in Rapid Social-Cultural Change - Part Two: Christian Responsibility in Political Action - Part Three: Christian Responsibility for Economic Development - Part Four: Community Development in Rural and Urban Areas.

Perhaps the most controversial section of the report and the most intensely discussed at the conference is Part Two on Christian Responsibility in Political Action. Most of the debate focussed on the Christian interpretation of nationalism. A brief quotation from the text agreed to will serve to indicate the detailed consideration given to this subject:

> "The nationalism of hitherto subject peoples and races gives tangible form to their awakening to a sense of human dignity and their struggle to discover and express their corporate selfhood. This nationalism finds the focus of its unity in the sense of common fate and common fight, that is, in the common determination of peoples to free themselves from alien political domination and discrimination". (p. 55).

It will be evident that this section of the report can provide the basis for fruitful discussion in many churches not only in Africa, Asia and Latin America, but in the churches of Europe and North America as well.

A theological point arousing much discussion concerned the Christian attitude toward the development of the World's Resources. Many of the theologians present challenged the statement that "Economic growth takes place by God's grace and under God's providence and judgment". This seemed to give a blessing to all economic and material growth of whatever kind and for whatever purpose. On these and other points we discovered at Thessalonica that there is much need for further thinking if Christians are to be able to speak clearly and relevantly to the profound moral and spiritual issues raised by social change.

We invite our readers to obtain a copy of the report and send us their comments and reactions.

I

WHAT HAPPENS TO MAN IN RAPID SOCIAL CHANGE ?

By

Prof. Egbert de Vries

"The people of Asia, Africa and Latin America have awakened to a new sense of fundamental human rights and justice and they are in revolt against enslaving political, economic, religious and social conditions". This statement is from the report on the Church and Social Questions of the Evanston Assembly. It goes on to say: "Society is characterized by the urge to national self-determination in political and economic matters, there is also the pressure to achieve changes rapidly". Rapid social change, as we have come to denote these processes, is largely the result of this awakening, revolt, urge and pressure of peoples in these areas. Yet five years after Evanston and after four years of ecumenical study of this topic we start off our conference with a question rather than an assertion. In fact it is a double reverse - not, "what happens to society when people are aroused to demand self-determination?" but, "what happens to man when society is undergoing radical change?"

I do not want to give the impression that Evanston was wrong. From the very beginning in the Rapid Social Change Study there has been this awareness of the two sides of the coin - the interaction between changes within man's mind and the changes in the world around him. By putting the question this way however we take cognizance of some important facts:

(1) Rapid social change has a profound effect upon personal change;

(2) From a spiritual and ethical point of view such personal changes may be good, bad, or indifferent, often for persons in the same group or family;

(3) Every single person in some respect and large groups in most respects are adapting themselves to change rather than acting as prime-movers; (At the same time, when large groups react, even passively, they become a potent factor in rapid social change.)

(4) There then arise, as the main theme of this conference calls them, "opportunities, choices and dilemmas" for individuals, for small and large groups.

Let us concern ourselves with the common man and his reaction to the changes in society; changes from a small, static, closed society - family, clan, village, tribe - to a larger, open society - national and even international. There are so many factors interacting on man's life in this change that the choice of where to begin the discussion is rather arbitrary. Let us speak first of man's relation to his work.

New Attitude to Work

The change of structure in society affects the connection between an individual's productive effort and his consumption. This is apparent when a

man starts to work for a wage; the wage worker usually does not know the effect of his work on the value of the ultimate product, nor can he compare the consumption value of his money wage with the value of his labour in the productive process.

When a farmer is working for the world market, a similar disconnection starts to operate. It is the merchant or perhaps the cooperative society or the government official or the tribal chief who induces the peasant to plant a crop for the world market; a certain price is offered him. When at a later stage the economic phenomenon of temporary overproduction sets in and prices drop, when he cannot buy the same amount of consumer's goods in exchange for the same amount of product in which he has put the same amount of effort, there is a disconnection between his effort and his consumption level.

Thus when a man works for a wage or produces for a world market, his sense of belonging to society is weakened. He stands more on his own, but this does not mean that life becomes more rational to him. There was, in his old society, a strong rational factor in that effort and consumption were closely linked, and even where this was threatened by natural disasters, by locusts, drought, disease or pest, and even where he had to use magic in order to protect himself from the dangers of nature, there was no break in his sense of belonging to his whole environment including nature and the supernatural around him. Now, however, there are human factors, people who stand between man's efforts and the results of his efforts.

We may say that today the insecurity deriving from nature has been diminishe but social security has at the same time suffered. Social security is taken care of in all static societies: the individual knows his status even if it is at the bottom of the social order; he is aware of his possibilities, even if he knows that he has to stay where he is. He knows what he has to suffer and what he can enjoy. His possibilities and opportunities in life and in society are given and safeguarded by society, even if they are unpleasant. Also, every society has a theory or explanation of man's suffering: it may be the work of evil spirits, or black magic, or the operation of divine justice in sin and suffering. In a period of rapid economic and social change this structure of security inevitably breaks down as more emphasis is placed on individual achievement.

The detachment of effort and consumption of the individual society of which we have just spoken can be put in general terms: "Man, when he is working in an open society, has an economic value detached from his social value." This is not just a social-economic thesis like the one expressed by Marx who believed that this was the essence of man in social-economic life. It becomes an experience, a new experience in the life of people, thousands and millions of people, who have suddenly found themselves in a world which in this respect at least is completely different from that of their forefathers. It happens in extreme form when the outside world impresses it on man through force, or through slavery, and even through the imposition of poll-taxes, and particularly in the payment of wages and the use of money.

Not all societies react in a similar way to this situation. In Africa it has largely induced men, working men, to detach themselves from their families, and to work at a great distance from their homes. The mobility of workers is

much greater in Africa than it ever has been and ever will be in Asia. It is said that 90% of the Africans in South Africa earn wages, and that 30% of the men of Nyasaland work outside of their territory and of course many more of them work for wages inside their territory. The use of money, and life in a world ruled by money and by world markets, very often is a shock to people; frequently they cannot make sense out of the movements of prices or wages; very often they cannot see that there is any justice in these changes. People easily tend to believe that there is injustice in changing prices, or in wages when they go down and in taxes when they go up; yet one can observe that these same people very soon become money hungry. This is true even at an early stage when the outsider might say that a people has not yet become fully dependent upon a money income. I have been told that an African labourer, because he still lives with one foot in his own old society, is not very responsive to increased wages, but I have (at the same time) been told by other people who have also worked with Africans that they are indeed very money conscious and that it is simply mental laziness on the part of employers if they cannot translate this urge of the Africans to become masters of their own destiny through earning money, into higher productivity. And, after all, only higher productivity can lay the foundation for real increase in the standards of living of people.

I have dwelt at length on the new conception of work because a man spends so much of his time, of his energy, of his thought on his work; and what work means for his life is important.

New Conceptions of Social Responsibility

I want to call attention to a second general phenomenon in the changing structure of societies: the important change in the patterns of responsibility, in the duties and tasks of people in the smaller and larger groups in society. In an old static society, the pattern of responsibility is clearly set: men and women, old and young, noble and common, rich and poor, know exactly what is expected from them. It is indeed one of the most important elements in the continuity of such a society that everybody is educated from a very young age into the specific responsibilities given to him or her; and many of the rights in society are related to shifts in responsibilities. New responsibilities are given to people at a certain stage of their life. Society also has developed stringent safeguards of its pattern of responsibility. It is almost impossible to shed part of a responsibility unless one wants to leave the environment altogether and become a stranger in another society.

But the fact that society changes, that the world market enters, that people leave to pursue their own economic interests, changes completely this pattern of responsibility and authority. Some people go to school, some gain position in and through government; officials of the government, not belonging to the old society, but definitely belonging to the new, take over responsibilities. Perhaps the government wants to unload part of its general responsibilities onto the shoulders of people in the village. All this, in a crude or subtle way, shatters the foundations of society. Society has to go on and it has to find new patterns and man has to adapt himself to these new patterns.

New Understanding of Nature

With the advent of new methods of production, medicine, tools, and new knowledge of the processes of human, vegetable and animal life, people get a

new look at the processes of nature. Before, these were considered as independent of man; it was believed that man, through his labour or his magic could only affect them very slightly. Now however, especially through the doctor and the veterinarian or through the agricultural officer, people learn to look at the processes of nature in a different way. They are told that nature can be changed by man, that it can be harnessed for the benefit of man. This is all very well, but nature loses its intimacy, its closeness to man, and man of course also asks himself, "In how far am I still part of nature? To what extent must I consider nature to be my enemy?"

New Relations between the Generations

A changing society also means a greater distance between the young and old in society. Education in particular has this effect. Very often people with only a few years of school, when they meet their parents will say: "You don't know anything about life. We have been taught at school."

The authority of teachers and youth leaders as over against that of parents creates in the minds of children a sense of distance between them and the older generation. Their parents lived in an age which did not understand its destiny, but they, the new generation, they are the bearers of the future. Grave misunderstandings and ruptures in family life are the result of this great distance between old and young.

New Distance between People and Government

Finally, there is also in a new society, especially when larger political units are set up or when a number of smaller units are combined under the government of a colonial administration, a greater distance between the people and their government than there was before. Government, because it becomes bigger and more pervasive in the total society, removes itself from the people. The influence of individuals or small groups on the decisions made by government declines. There is more democracy in an old village in Asia or in a tribal unit in Africa than there ever can be in a large country where numbers and distances prevent individuals in villages from participating actively in the decisions of government. But at the same time the government seeks to come close to people with its requirements. The separation between government requirements on the one hand, whether in the form of taxes or rules and regulations which have to be followed, and on the other hand the influence of people on government, be it personified in one or two persons or in a council, causes misunderstanding, tension, trouble.

So far, we have described the effects of rapid social change on man in terms of greater distance, greater distance between man and nature (including the supernatural); greater distance in the relation between effort and result in man's work; between the generations; between the citizen and his government, between the tasks and responsibilities and privileges given to people. To sum up, through rapid social change man is thrown back upon himself, he often finds himself alone, or even isolated and the different effects of these various factors upon different people also cause a new differentiation in society.

Defense Mechanisms of Man in the Midst of Social Change

In the stresses and strains of this rapid social change man erects various defense mechanisms. First, especially in a situation where man has been told

that through society and nature he could have an influence on his environment, the question arises in his mind: "Who is to blame for my misfortune, who is to blame for the differentiation which causes some people to rise, to become rich and influential while I remain low?" If the blame can be put on the foreigner or on a far-away government, it is easy to explain one's own low stage as being the guilt of somebody else or a group of people, out to exploit the poor man in his changing society.

Secondly, when people find that there is weakness in being alone and strength in unity a call for unity of those who are suppressed and oppressed, finds a ready ear, even if getting together does not mean a concentrated joint effort in improving, but only joining with other people in bitterness and hatred. Uniting gives some psychological satisfaction. People learn how to strive, how to fight, perhaps even how to hate. I won't say that hating the wrong things is bad at all, but if organised unity becomes another divisive factor in society man will only suffer more from rapid social change.

A third defense mechanism is for man to find escape in his dreams, perhaps the image of the past. It is the golden image - not of yesterday because the memory of the suffering of yesterday, for instance under the colonial regime, is still vivid, but of the day before yesterday. And equally strong in many cases is the dream of the golden future; here it is not the future of the day after tomorrow but of tomorrow. Hardly any government dares to set out for its people a development programme longer than five years although every government knows that it takes much more than five years to develop a better future for the nation. The dream, looking back and looking forward beyond the reality of today, can become a great danger to the changes which are necessary today and tomorrow. Christians are asked to stand in the reality of today, to dare to look at it, and to receive in this reality the courage and the strength to fight for the better future, even if it can come only slowly.

Evaluations of Social Change

It is important to see how these social and political distortions are appraised by people looking from the outside - by government, by philosophers, by social scientists.

There is one group which wants this social and political distortion and conflict; they want to discard the remnants of the old society as soon as possible in the conviction that the new future will then come more quickly. By the sacrifice of much for the moment the past is eradicated as quickly as possible. This may be called the Communist view.

There is another group which accepts these stresses and distortions as natural or unavoidable, and believes that government or society can do little about them. A century ago this line of thought was predominant in capitalist countries in Europe.

A third group considers these changes a nuisance to be eliminated by laws and regulations. This was the view of enlightened rulers in the late Middle Ages, in the very early stages of industrialisation and urbanisation in Europe; it is also a very live force in many colonial administrations. Here the government feels it is its duty to suppress all these distortions as much as possible by telling people exactly what is good for them and punishing them if they don't

do what government believes is good for them.

Another group believes that the way to cope with these problems is through social welfare. Aware of the teachings of Keynes and Beveridge, they consider that economic dislocations and political distortions are a hindrance to the development of economic life, and thus try through government action to remove from society as many of the stresses and strains as possible.

Sometimes Christians have looked at people lost in rapid social change as sheep that have strayed. They deplore it, but they do little about it, except perhaps to weep at what is happening to old standards of ethical values, security and safety; they are hurt by the disappearance of old cherished conditions; they do not look to the future for the new situation that is wanted. The churches sometimes do not realise that a true shepherd must do more than deplore the loss of the sheep, he must search it out.

Fortunately, there is in social change something more than the possibility for "lostness", for losing oneself in the turmoil of change. Men can also find their true selves, their place in society, and their relation to God. I need only remind you of the Evanston statement quoted in my opening remarks and also the subtitle of our Rapid Social Change Study - "Towards Responsible Emancipation". There is in social change and in the people involved in it an undeniable awakening. There is a self-discovery, a self-assertion, and a search for self-determination. People want to build into themselves the strength to live in the new situation and to discover ways and means to come out on top in it. There is also, thank God, in man and in society a kind of innate resilience; people, families, society can stand a lot of stress and strain and still maintain their "selfhood", their sense of dignity, and their humanity even in very miserabl circumstances. Were it not for this resilience, rapid social change might be a disaster; as it is, it is the hope for a new future.

The social scientist reasons that after the process of disintegration a new integration must take place. We might also hope that, after the rapids in the flood of events, we might discover quieter waters for mankind. But in western industrialized countries we find no example of society-wide reintegration, and in most countries of Asia and Africa our generation cannot hope to reach the stage of reintegration, of a consolidation of new ways of life, of new social relationships. We have to live in faith and hope of a new era where this may become possible. At the same time it is our duty to bring about and support by all means responsible emancipation. This process of emancipation differs in a number of important aspects from the processes leading to disintegration which we discussed above. Let me mention just a few: First, the processes of emancipation are selective in at least two senses. Not all people are affected by them. They involve individual decisions; also they do not affect all fields of human life simultaneously or to the same extent. It may be possible to have cooperative, or perhaps even collective, emancipation in certain areas of life: e.g. among farmers, the middle-class etc., but each area or field of emancipation has to be discovered and selected. Secondly, these processes of emancipation require action; they have to be worked for. One cannot accept them passively and live through them without making decisions and choices. All decisions lead to action, which may of necessity be painful and sacrificial as often as exciting and immediately fruitful. Thirdly, the personal emancipation process is impossible unless it spreads, and is imparted to others around. If it has no effect on society it leads to moral death for

the individual. Awakened people must be pioneers, but in our age the spread of emancipation processes requires indigenous leadership in local, regional, and national situations. Leadership can no longer be imported from outside by technical assistance or even by Christian missions. Fourthly, this means that old patterns and centers of leadership are challenged and called in question from within society. This may lead to serious conflicts between traditional authority and the new leadership because of the fear that the new leaders may seek authority to speed up the process of emancipation. This fear is common in all situations, in government and church, in tribal and family life.

In the processes of emancipation we see the challenge to the educator and more especially the Church. It is necessary to overcome the fear of both personal changes and new ambitions in individuals and the mass movements. Can the Church reach the young, the ambitious, the leaders, who often initiate the processes of rapid social change, and capture their imagination and help them see "Jesus Christ as the Light of the World" for them in this situation? The essential spiritual and moral elements of the emancipation processes are self-assertion, self-discovery, self-searching, self-determination, and a new resilience in man and society. The processes of reintegration and consolidation which we hope will follow, must be based on the creative and redemptive use of these elements.

Some Practical Consequences

If we as Christians take this emancipation development as a serious responsibility, we must undertake certain practical action and work. In the political realm, for example, the end of colonial regimes in Africa raises many questions about the structure and pattern of life which must be developed. We are particularly concerned about the position of three groups:

(1) Women and youth: their future will depend very much on the new structure of the family, and on the development of small groups within which they can begin to exercise the new responsibilities which are being thrust upon them.

(2) Industrial labour and rural workers: economically this group is lagging behind, partly because of population increase. Inevitably the mass of workers must bear the bulk of the real costs of economic development. What means can be devised to give them an adequate voice in the choices and decisions of public life and what educational facilities and group organization does this involve? How can leadership be developed which will understand the dilemmas in these choices and be able to interpret them to workers in industry and agriculture? These are a sample of the questions to be faced in this area.

(3) The younger churches: these so-called "younger" churches are also faced with the choices, opportunities and dilemmas of the emancipation process. In many cases, rapid social change threatens the very life of the younger churches through messianistic separatist movements. The churches are themselves making remarkable discoveries today about the relevance of the Gospel for a time of social change, but it is a painful and slow process hampered by outdated conceptions of Christian service and community. In their own congregational fellowship, in the relation to national life and in their

international ecumenical fellowship the churches must help each other to discover their ministry as a Church which emancipates people from the powers and demons of spiritual and moral disintegration.

Obviously, the task of the churches is not only or mainly to analyse situations. When we meet in this conference, we come from the struggles around the world and are preparing ourselves to return to work. In the meantime, the opportunity to spend together a full week of study, concentration and consultation should strengthen our hopes and insights and help the churches to see in rapid social change the unique opportunity of our day to make the Gospel a living force in our churches and our societies.

II.

AT WHAT POINTS CAN CHRISTIANITY MAKE A DIFFERENCE TO POLITICAL AND ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT IN AFRICA?

By

Dr. G. Kiano

I want to say first a word about my understanding of Christianity lest we limit our discussion to the organised Church and its members. In the story of the Good Samaritan we are told, for example, of people who were devoted as servants of God, whose daily duty was to serve the religious institution of the day. And they passed by on the road and saw a person in need of help, but they were too busy doing what the routine required them to do, and they passed by on the other side and neglected this particular person. Then the Good Samaritan came and found the person in need and felt that it was his duty to help. Now setting that story in African society, I feel at times the Church in Africa has tended to act not as the Good Samaritan, but as the professional religious person who found the needy person on the side of the road and simply went over the other side and went on to perform what routine the work required them to do. I am not saying that this is the general characteristic, but there has been much of that.

Christians must concern themselves not only with the duty of enlarging the Christian brotherhood and enlarging the church membership, they must face, for example, the economic plight and the problem of landlessness that are facing the people in our territories and try to come up with some answers and some hopes instead of saying we are concerned with "religion", we must leave politics and economics out. Until very recently, studies like these were not quite common among the Christian churches operating in Africa and Asia. For too long the economic situation of the people among whom the churches operated, has tended to be ignored. The Church must also face the break-down of various social institutions which is taking place at a very fast rate as the result of the urbanisation of the Africans.

We must also consider the challenge particularly in East and Central Africa where the social order and the powers that be, decree that there must be racial separation, that there must be racial discrimination. Now when a government or the authorities that be, decree that people living within a given territory must observe a particular behaviour which is lower than Christian, it is quite a challenge and the problem arises: to what extent can the Church compromise with such a social order in order to be allowed to exist, in order to be allowed to operate within the given territory.

Finally, in African societies most people have become engrossed with the problem of how to establish political freedom in their territories, not only the establishment of political freedom, but also how to sustain that freedom, how to sustain the values which go to make freedom a reality. These problems are today paramount in the African society and the Church must have some answers for them or at least give consideration to them. For too long perhaps we have delayed in calling together groups like this in which economists and political scientists and even nationalists like myself are participants in order to say what we as Christians can offer as answers to these problems.

The Need for Radical and Rapid Change

One of the major problems in these so-called rapidly changing societies is the economic problem. If you go to many of these areas - to Kenya, to Uganda, to Tanganyika, to Rhodesia -, although you call them, quite rightly, the areas in which rapid change is taking place, the first impression you get is that people feel changes are not taking place rapidly enough; they want land reform, industrialisation of the country in order to offer a more salutary way of making a living to a people who are primarily farmers, wages on the basis of performance rather than on the colour of the worker. Take, for example, the question of wages. In quite a number of the British eastern African territories wages are not just based on what the person does and what perhaps the traditional economist might call, the law of supply and demand. The individual comes from a rural area where he leaves his wife and children looking after his own land, carrying on some agriculture on half-of-subsistence wages and therefore the wages he receives are not designed to support his family, but wages designed to meet his needs as an individual in the urban area. This is the only way you can explain why, for example, in a territory like Kenya, in the area of Nairobi, the minimum wage is about ninety-one shillings a month. Ninety-one shillings a month from which a person has to pay rent, get his food, save something for his taxes and his financial requirement. When you ask how did we arrive at this figure of ninety-one shillings a month the reply is: this is the amount of money that will be necessary to keep this person's body and soul together within the conditions of the town. But the individual worker is really a family person, he has duties and dependents to consider. And the Church has to ask what kind of advice can we give in this situation.

Urban Housing

The housing to be found in many of the African urban areas is the type of housing which again allows for a man or a group of men to live in the town but not as a part of their family. In Kenya we call it "the bed space". In the municipally established housing projects the question is, how many bed-spaces is the municipality offering for the African population? And if you are thinking in terms of bed-spaces, as the space for a bed, then of course a room will be two bed-spaces, three bed-spaces, four bed-spaces or more. The result is that with the growth of towns in the African territories the African family institution finds it very difficult to stay together or to stick together because the housing in the town is housing for men. The wage in the town only provides for the individual worker and therefore the necessity arises for this person to leave his wife and children in the rural area, to visit them periodically, maybe once a year or only every eighteen months. The problem of juvenile delinquency arises not just in the towns, but particularly in the rural areas where the mother is left to look after the family because the father is away trying to make money though never bringing enough money home because the wage level is too low. The African family is jeopardised as urbanisation proceeds and once you disorganise, once you attack, once you destroy the family institution you destroy the community.

The disorganisation of African society, especially the African tribal society, is unavoidable. The tribal organisation no longer can perform its historic function; it cannot provide the economic protection that it offered to its members prior to the westernisation or the colonialisation of Africa. So it is quite natural that the tribal society should be disorganised, but when it comes to the family institution, one of the major problems to consider is how we are

going to fit urbanisation to the African family institution. We must develop a stable African urban community not of men who are usually migrants, but of people who live in towns with their families and in housing that is designed for family living, not for individual men's living. I know these houses from experience; I have lived in these houses and have seen some of the difficulties that arise when the wife at home cannot wait for the husband to return, so she comes to town and finds him living in these miserable places with two, three or four other men, and I have seen the difficulties that arise in trying to carry on family life that way. This question of African housing and its direct relationship to the disorganisation of the African family institution must be examined by more able sociologists than myself but it is a problem we have got to face squarely.

The Land Question

I must also refer to the land question. For a long time most Africans, particularly in East and Central Africa, have looked upon land as the only source of real and dependable economic security. Even today hardly any society in Africa below the Sahara has programmes for old age pension or unemployment compensation; and industrialisation in most of these areas (excluding South Africa) is still in its infancy.

Wage earning has not become a permanent way of making a living for any considerable number of people, but we find that as agriculture develops we require a smaller and smaller percentage of men to work on land than before; agricultural labour is getting more and more efficient with improved methods. So we are developing a class of men, who are landless, and yet they have been taught from the beginning that a man may be economically secure only to the extent that he owns a piece of land. This question of landlessness arising from the drastic economic changes that are taking place, is one that has not before now been properly thought out even by our own government.

The usual problem in a colony is that government really acts only under pressure. There is very little coordination of economic development and economic planning and consideration of the effect of particular proposals and how people displaced can be absorbed in another sector of the economy. The development of Africa has been haphazard and sporadic, determined by pressure used against those in authority.

Race and Land

The problem of landlessness is, of course, made all the more bitter in Eastern and Central Africa because it is connected with the problem of Race. In our territories, for some "unknown" reason, some land is set aside for people of one race, particularly Europeans. The Africans are put in reservations, which due to population growth, have become overcrowded while the European areas are usually underpopulated. And once you set these two facts together, one race with more land than another race in the same territory, you will have an explosive racial situation.

Is the Christian answer simply to say, remove the racial barriers and say that any man white, black or brown can own land in the territory? This has been offered as perhaps one of the most advanced propositions. However, due to the difference in the economic strength of the various communities if you open up the land for everybody and allow any Indian, any European or any African to buy land anywhere he wants, the African person whom you are trying to help by removing the racial barrier will find his land subjected to such economic speculation that

when he is offered 2,000 or 3,000 shillings, he sells it. This method will not help the African. This is the kind of problem we are dealing with today.

Race Tension in Africa

The Church must face the problems of living in a society where the social order decrees directly or indirectly that men of different races must live separately, and must even worship separately. We find this in the most absurd form, of course, in the Union of South Africa, where some people who claim to be Godly, use the Bible to support the separation of races (which I consider perhaps the worst thing a man could do; it is not only to do wrong but to try to use God to justify the wrong). They say that God made day and night different, He made the sky and the earth, He made the lands and the sea; He always thought in differences, and therefore men are different and must be made to live differently. It is to me the most serious misuse of God's word by man within the institution of the Church. And we Africans, outside South Africa, not very far better off but still a little better off, have taken good courage to see that now and then a man arises to protest; men like The Rev. Michael Scott, Father Huddleston, and Bishop Reeves who say this is un-Christian and I refuse to compromise with it.

This raises the question: to what extent can the Christian Church agree with the social order in order to be a good servant to the community. I know that in politics compromise is a necessary art. When I say to British people, give me my self-government today, they might give it to me tomorrow. I am not going to have to fight if they don't give it to me today so long as I know we might compromise on tomorrow. I know therefore that in politics one has to compromise. The Church also may sometimes find it necessary to do the same. But the Church must determine in which areas it is going to compromise and on which things there can be no compromise.

Take, for example, the question of missions in relation to racial groups living in the same territory. The Christian Church would be, of course, very glad to see every Moslem become a Christian, to see every Africanist become a Christian and to see every Christian become more Christian. But in a place like Kenya where you do have the Moslems who have established themselves for a long time and who believe in their faith as truly and sometimes even more deeply than we do - how justified are we to go to them with a 'holier than thou' attitude and say, yes we are going to be members of the same nation, but first we want to change you to be like us religiously. What I am raising here is this. In an area like that it may be necessary sometimes for the Church to say what interests us is not he who says, "Lord, Lord" but he that lives righteously. We will work with such persons as brothers in order that there can be brotherly relationship between the Christian Church and people who are not of the Christian faith, but who are working for common aims. In these respects compromises may be necessary. Otherwise the Church will be a force that divides people as it used to in the early days. In my early days in Kenya, the Church, in its vehement interest to win people, literally set one people against another. We still have such situations. My own village of today is a very good example of this. We have in the same village: Catholics, Seventh Day Adventists, Church of England, and some of the "saved" people doing their work in a vehement and intolerant way, feeling that if you are not of them, you must be against them. And in these same villages it is very difficult to believe that we all belong to the same clan, because the louder the Catholics sing on their side, the louder the saved people on the other side sing, and the more and harder the Adventists work to get a few more people to close their shops on Saturday and open them on Sunday. Thus in a small village the Christian Church

becomes, I think, wrongly a divisive force. In that area I say it is necessary perhaps for the Christian Church to reconsider and see how it can compromise in various ways in order to help the largest number, and help the leaders in this century to form common nations.

The Need for a Militant Church

But these are areas where, I feel, it cannot compromise - those areas in which the fundamental and the universal principle of fairness is intentionally broken. In an economy in which the exploitation of one race by another is accepted practice, it is the duty of the Church to speak and speak loud from the pulpit and say: this is wrong. Not as politicians but as men whose duty is to represent justice. I have often felt that the Church in Africa is not the militant church. There are people who really try to be Christians on Sunday, who preach to us, and then on Monday and Tuesday go and buy land in the European highlands in Kenya, which in African eyes is considered the emblem and the symbol of the grossest economic injustice. When my people find out, for example, that some leading church members are landowners in the white highlands which they consider the very embodiment of exploitation, then, of course, they say the Church has compromised wrongly.

The Church has ceased to be the Church militant in the field of race relations in Africa. Recently in Kenya we have begun to show a little courage, but we need to do more. For too long Kenya society has tolerated race separation. Is it necessary for a man to attend church as an African while his white Christian brother worships in another place even if they both understand the same language? I think the day has come for the Church of Christ in Africa to say: we no longer shall build churches for separate races; we shall simply build churches for worship. Let us do this in Kenya, in Nyasaland, in Southern Rhodesia and Northern Rhodesia, and then see whether the heavens shall fall on us. Sometimes you only have to try something to find that the opposition will have already given in. East and Central Africa (where the British have a guilty conscience even when they are segregating against us) is a place where we can declare that we are determined today not to have African churches and European churches but simply churches. And the same issue arises in matters like paying ministers. I know situations where an African minister is paid less than a European minister even if they are doing more or less the same work. It's about time the Church examined some of these practices and showed that it rejects racial differences.

Political Freedom in Africa

The challenge to the Church is most serious on the question of political freedom. Here I am referring not only to those areas where Africans are a majority, areas like West Africa where there are very few Europeans but also those areas where they have decided, "This is our home", and they have taken land to live there. In those areas the question of political freedom is very serious. We and the British might agree on constitutions but more important is the question: has good will been established between ourselves and the Europeans in Kenya or in Tanganyika or Rhodesia? What we agree to on paper may not last if the heart is not in it.

Today when we nationalists talk of the liberation of the African, we find the European settler who says: "No, this fellow's father used to live in trees only fifty years ago" (as if that has anything to do with today). Cultural

differences cannot ever be used to justify the denial of human rights. The difficult question that faces a man like me is this: if the African masses come to believe that this Kenya white is against their freedom no matter what constitutional guarantee we give him, then when these masses come on top, they will say to the European: "Brother, you were against my freedom so you can't have any of it now that I have it".

That's one of the most challenging problems for a leader today. The greatest duty and the greatest kindness the Christian Church could do to such Europeans is to say: "Forget the past, help these Africans, help them with their education problems, help them create and organise their life, help them establish strong local government institutions which shall stand as bulwarks against the tendencies of totalitarianism". And if Europeans do that, people will say: "Oh, so you too believe in freedom".

The solution of the great tension between my people and the European minority in my territory when (not if) African nationalism triumphs, worries me. Very much depends on whether my people will view their fellow white men in the same territory as the enemies of their freedom or whether they shall say: "These people helped us to build this freedom and we must incorporate them into it".

The Urgent Need for Action in the Church

Today there are various Christian committees; for example, in the Christian Council of Kenya we have now the Social Research and Studies Department, where such problems are studied. I hope we shall not only study but actually having studied, come to some conclusions and do something about carrying out the conclusions. The role of the Christian Church in Africa today is, I feel, one of doctoring, of improving human relations between the many people there. That is a real job - in some places we may have to compromise as I said between people of different religions. In some other parts we must say: "No, this is the way". In a continent beset with problems, in a continent where there is confusion and desire for change, the Christian Church must be the militant church, peaceful but militant.

We have a lot to be thankful for in Africa: In the field of education, where the Church has borne the greatest burden; in the field of better health, in the rural areas, the Church has often done good work. But I am afraid that if I were to estimate honestly the influence of the Church on the changes that are taking place, I will say that it is not being felt very much. Why this is, is perhaps the reason for our being here today. In my assessment, the Church is often doing good work, but the Church is not one of the major influences shaping the future of tomorrow in Africa. And if it fails to do so now, in this formative stage, then I fear it will be too late in only five years' time.

Although I have said that as far as many Africans are concerned, changes are not taking place quickly enough, in fact changes are coming very fast. I am reminded of my friend Julius Nyerere, the political leader of Tanganyika. Only three years ago Julius Nyerere was in the United Nations asking the British to sign an agreement with him that his country shall be free in twelve years' time, and the British said, "No, that's too soon, you can't have it; we won't agree". Today if you say to Julius Nyerere, twelve years hence you shall have freedom, he would laugh at you. He's expecting freedom in the next two years, and he might get it in the next three years. The change has been so rapid that even the British who said three years ago they would not sign an agreement with him for independence in twelve years, today, are conceding that they might have to give him freedom in three years' time.

In the Church also we cannot wait too long to act. Today, most of the leaders have at least some respect for the Church. But I am reminded of a statement that Jomo Kenyatta once made. He said that Christianity was to him like milk. There was nothing wrong with it except that it came in the wrong container, which means that to many people Christianity happens to be identified with the race of the people who brought it to the continent. In the present situation in Africa it becomes doubly urgent that we Christians and especially the white Christians do something to solve these problems.

I have been speaking frankly, I did not say how nice things are - the nice things you already know about. We are here to find out what is wrong. If I have been brutally frank it is because I believe that sometimes you should see the way we feel, the way we accuse you even if we are wrong. There may be misconceptions in what I have said. But you need to know the misconceptions of the Church that are there; without knowing what makes us mad you cannot really understand us. Perhaps in this personal way of speaking to each other we can make the Church of Christ the Church militant so that when it says, "Onward Christian Soldiers", it really means Onward Christian Soldiers.

III.

THE CHURCH AND THE RACE SITUATION IN SOUTH AFRICA

Two Comments on Dr. Kiano's address

A. Statement by The Rev. A.M. Meiring, Dutch Ref. Church of Transvaal

I feel it is necessary to make a statement with reference to the remarks of Dr. Kiano of Kenya.

In the course of his address on discrimination and wrongs in Africa against which he called the Church to be the Church Militant, he also cited South Africa, adding that he had never been there. Mentioning racial separation he expressed his conviction that the worst sin a Church can commit was not only to condone this but to use Holy Scripture to justify it.

Because there is apparently no doubt to what Church the speaker was referring, viz. the Dutch Ref. Churches of South Africa, some comment on this is called for.

It may be remembered by some here that the General Assembly of the World Council of Churches at Evanston in 1954 discussed the racial question in its world setting and took certain decisions, on some of which the representatives of the South African Dutch Ref. Churches abstained from voting. While these decisions were mostly taken by large majorities, though by no means by a unanimous vote - the Dutch Ref. Church members, recognising the power of the consensus of world Christian conviction expressed in these decisions, agreed to bring the report of the World Council of Churches before their churches, to study the decisions and to remain in contact with the W.C.C. on these questions.

Much serious thought and prayerful study of the racial situation and of Word

of God has been, and is being, exercised by the Dutch Reformed Churches of South Africa. From time to time the Church policy on this question is expressed by Synods. This was also done by the Federal Council of the Dutch Ref. Churches of South Africa in 1957.

In August 1958 the Dutch Ref. Church, at the General Assembly of the Ecumenical Synod of Reformed Churches held at Potchefstroom, Transvaal, associated herself with and endorsed a statement on the racial question, which said inter alia -

"No single race may deem itself entitled to a privileged position and consider itself superior to other races.

"If members of the same race are likewise believers, they should be received as brothers and sisters in Jesus Christ.

"This neither denies nor ignores the fact of the multiplicity of nations, but in that multiplicity the unquestioned equality of all races, peoples and manifestations of the true Church must be recognised according to the Scriptures

"In order to progress towards the unity of believers, the efforts of the younger Churches to achieve full ecclesiastical equality with the older Churches should be encouraged.

"No direct scriptural evidence can be produced for or against the intermixture of races through marriage. The well-being of the Christian community and the pastoral care of the Church necessitate, however, that due consideration be given to the legal, social and cultural factors which affect such marriages." (These are excerpts from a Twelve Point Statement).

This Synod also appointed a committee to study further aspects of the problem. It noted that these were problems of race in other countries besides South Africa, which likewise urgently needed attention. It was satisfied that its South Africa member churches were critically and constructively viewing their own situation. (See Monthly Newsletter of the Dutch Reformed Church - Die Ned. Geref Kerk van Transvaal, Sept., 1958).

In the light of the above we shall perhaps be forgiven if we answer to the passing references in the candid speech of Dr. Kiano, and as candidly turn them down. We are not, in all respects, able to identify ourselves with the W.C.C. view on race, but we do not therefore condone social injustice or appeal to Scripture in order to justify discrimination.

We have no quarrel with his statement that the Church of Christ should be the Church Militant, provided issues are correctly discerned. But we fear that his <u>open</u> call to the Church to be the Church Militant, may in a complex political and social situation, unless carefully understood, lead to unfortunate acts and utterances - as indeed has actually happened in South Africa.

The Dutch Ref. Church of South Africa would hesitate to overestimate her influence in the life of the peoples of South Africa and her power to reach those in authority. She <u>is</u> historically the oldest and largest Church, she <u>has</u> gone through great crises with the Afrikaner people in times when their very existence was at stake. On the other hand she has also built up an enormous missionary effort and sent hundreds of her own sons and daughters into the

mission field, in South Africa and far beyond its borders. She would not willingly be a party to a policy which may jeopardize this effort.

The Dutch Reformed Churches of South Africa have their own way of meeting the various and complex racial problems in South Africa. They do not expect others necessarily to agree with this. They would, however, count upon the acceptance by other member churches of the W.C.C. of the sincerity of their attitude and of their efforts to guide their own people and to set right human injustices where they may be able to do so.

And they would be open and obedient to the guidance of God who alone can direct their future attitudes in a world of rapid social change.

B. Statement by The Rev. A.W. Blaxall

With considerable diffidence I have agreed to say something about Dr. Kiano's reference to South Africa, and the reply read by the Rev. A.M. Meiring. You will understand that this is purely a personal comment. The Christian Council of South Africa consists of 23 churches and missionary societies, among whom there are probably some who would comment with different emphasis. But I do believe that what I say represents the views of a very large body of South African Christians of all races. I do not dispute what Mr. Meiring said, namely that the Dutch Reformed Church is the largest single Church in South Africa, but I also believe that all the others together represent the majority of Christians in our land.

When Dr. Kiano came down from the platform I told him that he was mistaken in thinking that the D.R.C. base their belief in separate racial development (apartheid) on Scriptural grounds. He said it was news to him which he was glad to learn.

But as I personally see it, the basic thought in Dr. Kiano's speech is true, namely that racial differentiation as practiced in South Africa is a stumbling block to many people, and an embarrassment to many missions. It may surprise Mr. Meiring to hear that during my vacation in Britain these last few months I have spent much time, both at meetings and in conversations, trying to explain how it is that Christian people tolerate some of the practices so often recorded in the overseas press. It is a strange experience trying to defend people with whom one does not agree, but I do it because I love the country of my adoption and all its people.

It should not surprise Mr. Meiring that people like Dr. Kiano judge from what they heard years ago. A comparatively recent statement, like that from the Potchefstroom meeting, takes time to become known. In the same way we in the Christian Council group are sometimes surprised to find that people do not realise we have wrestled with this subject, and criticised public policy, long before this present Government came into power.

Mr. Meiring referred to the Evanston statement on Church and Race, courageously admitting that delegates from his Church abstained from voting. To those of us who stand by that statement it is great encouragement when it

is confirmed at other meetings.

In some countries the Christian mission operates in a non-Christian state, and has constantly to search itself in that context. In South Africa we are ruled by a powerful government pledged to carry out a policy which is to many of us the negation of that Evanston statement - we have to live and work in that context: It is hard, brethren, because it is a struggle within the Household of Faith. That we are able to meet together in consultations like this gives us courage; we thank God for such opportunities.

I am reminded of an aged African, Mr. Moikangwa by name, who was present at a meeting in Johannesburg when many hard things were said. He told us that he was born on a Boer farm in the Orange Free State; at 18 he was with his 'boss' when Jamieson was captured. Later he became a teacher, and sub-inspector. He concluded by saying "Things are different in South Africa today, we have forgotten how to give and take".

It is the remorseless determination to carry out the policy of racial separation without any concessions which is doing so much harm. If only a few concessions could be made - for example, when the government showed its determination to establish ethnic universities, the Christian Council joined with others pleading that the existing open universities be allowed to continue. But our plea was not heeded.

We do understand something of the difficulties of our brethren who hold responsible posts in the D.R.C. Whenever we have Christian Council meetings and conferences we always invite the D.R.C. to send fraternal delegates. They do sometimes, not always. Our constant prayer is that they will more and more find it possible to strive with us in the search for those areas of give and take which alone can ensure peaceful development.

We thank God for the two years work together with them on this Rapid Social Change study, and rejoice to learn that it has been decided to call an inter-church, inter-racial conference in December of this year, at Johannesburg, to carry the study further.

May God of His mercy use these labours for the furtherance of His Kingdom in our beloved land.

IV

THE IMPLICATIONS OF RAPID SOCIAL CHANGE FOR THE MISSIONARY PROGRAMME

By

Dr. Virgil Sly

The nineteenth century found the Christian churches possessed with a growing awareness of the great imperative to share the "good news" of Christ with the world. The nineteenth century saw Christianity become more widespread geographically than it or any other faith had ever been in the history of man. The nineteenth century missionaries went out under the compulsion of the commard of Christ to "Go into all the world and preach the Gospel". There was no question in the mind of the missionary or of those who sent him as to why he was there or why he had been sent. Their concern was for the redemption and salvation of man. This concern brought into sharp focus his social needs. The missionary tried to find ways in which to meet them. In comparison with the vastness of these needs his effort often seemed puny and futile but where he planted his institutions of education, medicine and social concern, massive and awe-inspiring good emerged. If an accurate study could be made of the influence of these institutions of social concern, it would, in truth, be found that the missionary impact was a dominating factor in making us aware of the very social changes which bring us together and which cause us so great concern.

These missionary efforts were based upon an often imperfect understanding of the will of God and the teachings of Jesus.* The programme was often mixed with the highest purposes of their understanding of the love of Christ and their position of coming from a so-called advanced civilisation and culture with which they often confused their purpose. I recall a "good" church member who is reported to have said to one of our missionaries, half a century ago, "Now make good Americans of those heathen". Nevertheless the basic impact of the thesis of love loomed larger and larger in the effectiveness of the world outreach of the mission. The brotherhood of man under the fatherhood of God resulted in a concept of a person of worth and dignity. It was this concept that gave the impetus to the young nations toward freedom and liberty. It was this emphasis that led to an awareness of the wrongs that pressed down and exploited men for the selfish greed of others. It was this concept that challenged the social structures of the countries in which the missionaries were working. Regardless of how inept the handling of the revolutionary message of the love of God and the brotherhood of man, the message got through. It was Christian missions committed to love that challenged the social evils of the time. Missions were basically founded in areas of great human poverty and need. They fought flood and drought and famine. They cared for countless thousands of victims of disaster and attempted to prevent the recurrence of such disasters. Missionaries were trained in all of the arts for the advance of human welfare.

Schools were founded everywhere. In fact, the educational system of some of the countries of the world are now founded upon mission school system. Where the church went, the school followed. Missions educated women and girls as well as men. Schools of all grades were established and, as in the West, many of the great colleges of the East were founded by missionaries.

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*In the first part of his address, which is not included here, Dr. Sly showed how the New Testament's teaching of love determines the Christian concern for the problems of rapid social change.

The problem of human suffering was always present. So in love came the doctor and the nurse, out of which has emerged the total medical programme of some countries and a concern for public health and welfare.

So missions have always been concerned with social needs. They founded schools, hospitals and colleges. They met, to the extent their meager resources made possible, the tragedies of famine and disaster. In a hostile world they proclaimed the love of God and attempted to show by their lives what the "good news" meant.

The New Situation of Missions

The twentieth century brought explosive changes. Changes when it comes slowly can be met without too much confusion but explosive change brings about need for radical readjustment far beyond the ability of the time to absorb. The explosive change of our time has brought about many problems. The mission boards and the emerging churches have not been unaware that these changes were taking place. They have been studying the problems as they have emerged and have been trying to find out what the place of the church and its mission is in this new and critical era. Especially are they attempting to reassess the relation of the mission of the Gospel of Christ and its social application to our day.

The western missionary as we have said was and is a child of his time and a product of the environment from which he came. The old context of his experience permitted him to think that he was not only a message of "good news" but was also bringing a superior culture. This attitude permitted him to ignore some of the basic problems of social change within the countries to which he went. He did good, great good, but for the most part it was daubing salve on a great ulcer without cleansing the blood stream. Today the alert missionary is aware that he must present his good news within the centre of the areas of social change and revolution. He can neither isolate himself in his message from them. His mission board must also see itself within this same context.

We of the missions of the church must discover what it means to be Christian missionaries and to establish the church in the midst of unprecedented tradition smashing issues of social change including our own traditions. Too much of our missions have been an attempt to reproduce the image of the church of the west. This cannot be in our times if we are to be true to the ever changing needs of man to whom the message of good news is to be given.

We are fumbling in the era of transition. The past could be called the colonial era of individualism in missions; the future can be called the ecumenical era - a creative era of fellowship in common concerns arising from the very life and person of those to whom we are sent and serve. This change will affect us profoundly not only in the programme and technique of missions but also in the theology of missions.

I must remind the conference that if the mission has been remiss in meeting some of the problems of sound concern they have been reflecting the lack of the social consciousness of the churches that sent them. It has seemed to me sometimes that my own church has more confidence in passing assembly resolutions concerning social issues than courageously facing social action.

Missions being very human have carried forward their work within the security of the status quo. The status quo no longer exists. Our work if carried on within the revolutionary areas of social change must be one with the concerns of the Younger Churches as they face with creative Christian action such issues as affect the living needs of their people. The church in the field must know that the sending church is one with them in their dreams and also with them in their trials and sufferings.

It is impossible for me to list all of the issues that confront us in the projection of the mission programme in the limits of this paper. I would say in the very beginning, however, that every concern of the studies of the areas of rapid social change is also the concern of the missionary movement because they have to do with:

- Man and his needs - based upon the pattern of the concern of Jesus for men.

- Man and his family - an inclusive concept that includes all of the pressures bearing upon it

- Man and his work -
  - earning a living
  - working conditions
  - freedom

- Man and his state -
  - his citizenship
  - his freedom
  - his justice
  - his resources for living.

- Man as an object of God's loving redemption.

Let us discuss some of these problems:

1. The Relationship of Mission to Colonialism.

Missions have been related to colonialism in the past. This fact must be admitted. The only excuse that one can make is that these relationships were products of history and the mores of the time. There is no time in this paper to trace the story of the involvement. We can only admit it was so, and also admit an imperfect understanding of the true purpose of the Mission of God.

We also know that there were many protests against colonialism on the part of mission boards and missionaries. I recall my own board, upon the request of the missionary staff, protested the use of American forces in intervening for the protection of missionaries in areas of conflict in colonial possessions.

Nevertheless the taint of colonial procedure still clings to missionary work. Missions are accused of maintaining control of funds and administration. We are also accused of attempting to hold the younger churches as branches of the mission-sending church to add to the stature and prestige of the mother church. This, they tell us, is the colonial pattern.

The only way out of this situation for mission boards and missionaries is

to prove by their selfless love their concern for the needs of the people they serve. The missionary must identify himself with the aspirations of the people and rise above his westernism. The church must be under a leadership of its own choosing. If any missionary personnel is provided it must work under the direction and the conditions set by the church on the field. The church must feel free to structure itself to meet its own needs and culture.

2. The Mission and the Political and Economic Aspirations of the State.

The missionary calling is above any partisan relationship within the political structure of the sending or the receiving countries. The missionary, unlike the communist, cannot become involved in the political struggles of the state. The Christian contribution which he can make is the concept of internationalism and world brotherhood under the fatherhood of God. The missionary's concern is for the needs of people and for them he becomes an advocate of freedom and economic help. He also is available in the sharing of skills and "know-how" in economic development and projects designed to lift the standards of the living of his people. Missionaries are not ambassadors between states; they are ambassadors under the divine compulsion of the message of Jesus Christ and go where His spirit leads them.

3. The Role of the Mission and the Emerging Church.

The role of the Mission as the dominant body with sovereign control is passing out of the picture. Our new relationship is from mission to church and from church to church. The passing of administrative responsibility from the mission to the church is very difficult. This I well know, because I am deeply involved in it. To be constructive it must be gradual. The basic issue is whether we are ready for the transfer. Have we been preparing a leadership for such a time as this? Is it the agreed policy of the Board that this is to be done? Has the church on the field been prepared to assume this responsibility? And has the church been assured that the church of the West is in earnest?

4. The Mission Institution and the Structure of the Younger Churches.

Most of our institutions have been created in the image of their western counterparts. When the younger church sees the massive problem of maintenance and support, it cannot but feel the impossibility of continuing them out of their resources. The issue is whether the church on the field is willing for the sending church to remain in partnership with such institutions. In my own Board, a definite policy has been adopted seeking such partnership, with the nationals in complete charge. Also, we are experimenting with small types of institutions which when turned over to the church can be completely sustained from resources on the field.

5. The Mission and its Power Derived from Money and Goods.

There was much discussion in the East Asia Christian Conference about the grace of giving as well as the grace of receiving. Many of the younger churches feel that as long as the sending churches control the source of funds, the control which has been passed to them is an empty gesture. Mission boards must find ways whereby they can maintain the stewardship of handling funds and also preserve the self-respect of the receiving church.

The problem of vast amounts of relief funds and goods pouring out of the West in generous concern for the needs of people has brought us into conflict with the self-supporting desires of the younger church. In fact, in some instances it has degraded the church. The question of how to do good and how to meet human suffering and not degrade the recipient is becoming a very real problem.

6. The Problem of the Past and Present Identity with Government Support.

The mission never had enough money in its whole history to meet the needs that were always confronting it. It is no wonder that when government, through educational, medical and social service, offered to support large areas of mission work, it was immediately accepted. This very fact, however, in the colonial situation merged the identity of the mission with that of the colonial state. In some countries, the freedom of teaching Christianity is denied within schools, now that the source of the support, or a portion thereof, is within the power of the new state. In other countries, the fact that money was received from the colonial powers makes the mission or the church receiving the support suspect. Missions and the churches must find their new role in distinctly Christian institutions and projects which may compress the breadth of their contribution but will deepen its Christian content.

7. The Younger Churches Desire to be Non-Mission-Related.

It is a very natural desire on the part of the younger churches to wish to cut the bonds of control of the parent mission. In the flush of their new strength as church, there is a feeling that their relationship should be with church rather than with missions. The younger church thinks it sees more freedom from denominationalism in a broader relationship with ecumenical bodies. Yet they would like to maintain their denominational sources of support. Mission boards and churches of the West must see this as an opportunity to utilize the ecumenical movement in projecting the total cause of the Christian mission.

8. The Role of the Missionary.

There is real question as to just what the role of the missionary is to be in this new situation in world mission. The day of control and domination, either by boards, institutions or persons, is passing. The missionary in the past was in the dominant position. In the future he is merely a person in a direct church-to-church relationship. Missionaries who cannot fit into this pattern and direction will be unhappy and should be recalled. They must be trained to fit into the existing situation and the spirit of the Master who called them forth. Studies are being made by mission boards as to the place of the missionary and as to the basis of his service; studies that involve length of service, furlough, housing, standard of living and the basis of his calling. Efforts are being made to have him feel a vital participants within the life of the church to whom he is sent. Procedures are under way for complete direction of his activities under the church which receives him.

9. The Implications of Agriculture, Industrialisation, Urbanisation, and Population Explosion.

Mission boards and younger churches must begin to see what the two words "whole world" mean. Our concept in missions has been largely geographical in

this relationship. The advent of jet travel, inter-continental ballistic missiles and almost instantaneous communication has shifted the emphasis to common issues of total world concern. Agriculture the source of food and the occupation of millions of the world population rises with our awareness of vast population increase. New techniques for producing food demand of missions a restudy of the programme for raising food. Industrialisation and urbanisation become a world problem. Industrialisation is proceeding at a fantastic pace in the formerly undeveloped countries. The situation is really amazing, as one sees outside the mud huts of the village huge power dams and great industrial plants and the drawing of the village people into the great industrial centres. Here is a call to mission for the young church and the missionaries to find a common programme of concern to meet the needs of these people plunged into these social problems without any preparation.

The population explosion which confronts the world has no locale. It is everywhere. This problem drives the Christian world to a fresh biblical and theological study of the nature and the calling of the Church in the world and of the object and the goal of its witness. Here are great areas of social study which have conflicting implications for the whole of the Church. The issues that I have presented to you are but a few of the many with which missions must be concerned. Others to be mentioned are:

- Resurgent non-Christian religions
- Dynamic vital nationalism
- Technical assistance programmes of government and international organisations
- Issues of race and culture
- Unity of the church with our ecumenical concern.

10. <u>The Implications of the Study of Areas of Rapid Social Change in Mission Policy</u>.

Many of the boards of missions are trying to evolve basic strategy to reach great new areas of Christian responsibility, especially in the social field. I can only speak for my own Board, which has been studying this problem over the past ten years and quote to you some of the policy statements we have approved as a part of our rethinking of missionary tasks:

"Recognise the demand of men for a change in their lot, for freedom, for dignity, for human rights, for bread and for land, as a concern of the revolutionary Gospel of Jesus Christ. Missionary activity must not withdraw from areas of tension.

"Help churches at home and abroad to see the need of responsible action in search for new patterns of living. Rapid social change has not been an easy experience for people or nations profoundly affected by the impact of Western life.

"Look upon world upheavals as opportunities for reappraisal of objectives and new methods, realising that antagonism is not as strong a barrier to the Gospel as is indifference.

"Lift the Christian mission to a fellowship higher than any partisan relationship within the political framework of the sending or of the receiving

country.

"Evaluate the various types of work now being conducted with special reference to the effectiveness of institutions in meeting the need of people and the integrity and health of the church.

"Make wider use of modern methods and techniques in:

a) Medical work through health education, mobile units and road clinics, medical social work.

b) Christian social service through rural industrial and other cooperatives, relief and rehabilitation, counseling, guided migrations.

c) Mass communications such as radio and other audio-visual programmes.

d) Literacy and literature programmes, training in religious journalism, art, book vans, and other types of literary work.

e) Christian education involving church school, week-day Christian education, conferences, and the provision of programmes involving children, youth and adults.

"Stress mobility in the training of the missionary staff in order that staff may expect to be moved into areas of strategic importance, if the need arises."

V

COLONIAL GOVERNMENT IN COUNTRIES OF RAPID SOCIAL CHANGE

By

Prof. Margery Perham

Our discussions in this Conference have been so full that when I was asked, at the end of our proceedings, to deal with any point that had been left out, it seemed that we had covered every imaginable aspect of our subject. Yet there is, perhaps, one factor which has been assumed rather than defined or even mentioned. It is the object of most of the reforms we have proposed and the target of most of the criticisms, or at the least, it is the inert mass that lies across the path we want our fellow-men to take. This X factor is government, the colonial government. This subject is most directly relevant, of course, to the remaining dependent areas, but 'colonialism' still influences the thoughts and often the policies of the newly independent. Since, however, Africa is the region in which there are still the large-size remaining colonies, that is the part of the world of which I will speak. And, mainly, of British East and Central Africa.

I shall be accused in what I am going to say of being an apologist for imperialism. I run the risk of being stuck as full of the arrows of your criticism as that unfortunate Saint Sebastian whom the old masters painted so often - too often for my taste. What I want to try to do is to 'place' government in the perspective of our subject, that of countries experiencing rapid social change. After all, if we are deciding to reform something we should try to understand its nature. Even if we only want to remove it we will still need to measure its size and weight. It so happens that in this Conference there are, I think, only two of us whose experience has been in the sphere of government, certainly of colonial government. Not that I am in the service of any government! I have always been a critic of the mistakes and faults of my own, but in my work I have had opportunities of seeing colonial government from the inside as well as the outside.

It is not easy today to get a balanced view of colonial government. There are two main reasons for this.

The first is that in this 'one world' in which we live, with all its pressing dangers, with new nations coming into existence almost monthly, and the need to understand a vast range of problems and regions, it is difficult enough for citizens to master even their current settings. Yet full understanding of any national or international question requires knowledge of its historical background. This is certainly true of Africa. The key to the African situation lies in the amazing historical fact that although Africa lies so close to Europe, and through its northern margin was part of the ancient world, the great solid block of tropical, middle Africa lay almost completely shut away from direct external contact until some sixty or seventy years ago, that is, within an old man's lifetime. It was then that modern Europe, with all the power of its new science and equipment, penetrated this lonely Africa with great power and speed. This trick played by geography and history has

thrown a strain upon poor human nature almost greater than it could bear. It had a literally shattering effect upon the societies most directly exposed to the new influence, but all tribes have suffered from the process of disintegration which Professor de Vries analysed so realistically in his opening address - a disintegration on one face of the coin, a release from cultural isolation on the other.

We must face the existence of the immense gap between the cultures which were brought so suddenly into intimate relationship. This admission does not entail any assessment of their respective moral values. Nor, I need hardly say, does it imply any inherent differences between races. I think that Christians, or rather, some Christians, with our Lord and Saint Paul to teach them, were led by their faith to believe in the potential equality of all men long before the scientists decided to confirm this belief. That Christendom as a whole was slow to act upon this belief was explained, though not justified, by the poverty of most of middle Africa and the unintelligibility to the outsider of its thousand tribal societies. Since that first contact an ever-increasing number of Africans have entered through education and experience into the world community and external influences, political, religious, scientific and economic, are beginning to transform the continent. But in view of tropical Africa's long isolation and of the scanty and uneven distribution of its peoples and resources, especially in Eastern and Central Africa, it must be a long time before these regions can draw level with the other continents. The pace of advance will depend, of course, upon the alliance between internal energy and order with external investment both of capital and of skilled service.

These hard facts of history have been emphasized because there is a tendency on the part both of Africans and Europeans to blame the other side not for some but for all the strains and disharmonies of their contact. It should surely be a reconciling thought that perhaps the greater part of these can be ascribed to harsh circumstances and only the lesser part to wilful human error. It may be argued that, apart from any deliberate oppression, by annexing large areas, when they could not have the knowledge or the resources to carry the burden successfully, the colonial powers added an extra margin of trouble to that which was inherent in the unequal contact. Annexation was, however, difficult to avoid. Once modern Europe had opened the locked doors into the interior, a return to the tribal status quo was no longer possible, and, in the absence at that time of appropriate international agencies, the issue lay between the controlled impact of government and the uncontrolled impact of external forces.

In assessing results it should also be remembered that the period of colonial rule in Africa has been brief in comparison with that in Asia. Before there could be any serious new development there had to be full administrative control and this had hardly begun before the outbreak of the first world war. This was followed by a serious slump and then by the second world war. The achievements of colonial governments should not be judged by the latest standards of the urgent welfare state and with little allowance for past handicaps of time, concepts and resources.

A second difficulty in gaining a balanced view of colonial government is harder to define though it springs out of the first. It affects us especially in such a gathering as this. Our sympathy is with the governed: we want to understand their problems, to enter, belatedly it may be, into their minds.

And they are mostly in that phase of their history when the very dynamic of self-assertion and rejection almost forces them into an attitude of wholesale condemnation towards their governments. Their political leaders especially, because Africa offers them so little positive material out of which to create the needed spirit of unity and nationalism, seem driven to rely almost wholly on the use of negative factors. Africa is caught in the ever increasing pace of events in our world: there is for this continent no possibility of the slow maturing of the older nations. Unfortunately a policy of haste which outruns even modern techniques of communication may result in intimidation, moral or physical. In the full swing of the reaction against colonialism, in which most of the nations of the world, for various reasons, support the African view, there is little room for discrimination. The balance of the good and bad, of the useful and the destructive, both as between periods and territories, is too easily ignored. Today in the tragedy of Algeria and the grave mistakes, as I see them, of British policy in Nyasaland, the relatively peaceful and successful progress of other regions towards national fulfilment tends to be ignored. The balance of responsibility may still rest with the colonial powers, but now that the Africans have left the age of tribal innocence and eaten of the world's tree of knowledge, are there not standards of conduct, of veracity, of wisdom and forbearance that we must ask to see displayed on their side of the movement for emancipation as well as upon the other? We wish to redeem the wrongs of the past and to dissociate ourselves from them. In our desire to understand and to help those who suffer from a sense of frustration or indignity we are tempted to agree with their views, all their views, or at least to refrain from dissent or criticism at any point lest it cost us their confidence. I know the temptation well myself. Yet is it not a subtle form of mental superiority not to be wholly frank, not to risk disagreement or offence by stating, where necessary, what we believe to be true whether about historical causes or contemporary situations?

The end of the colonial regime is in sight. The three major colonial powers in Africa have declared their objective. All French colonies except Algeria are free to choose independence or membership of the French community. The Belgian government has declared the aim of freedom for the Congo, though in that vast and politically very immature region the fulfilment of the promise may be slow. Britain has already recognized the independence of the huge territory of the Sudan and the small one of Ghana. Nigeria will take her freedom in 1960 to be Africa's most populous state. Uganda is being coaxed into unity in the face of African divisions: Tanganyika has made a sudden and easy start on the road to freedom. In Kenya, as a white settled country, the way forward is complicated but the main corner has surely been turned in the last few months. Only in Central Africa does the future seem to be in doubt, and I believe that the present troubles in Nyasaland will lead to a series of steps, painful and slow though the way may be, towards African self-government in the two northern territories.

These varying situations need to be estimated for they affect our discussions Among members of this Conference there has been general agreement that the growth of nationalism in countries of rapid social change is to be welcomed as an expression of freedom and of individual and group personality. We assume that colonial power is something to be liquidated in the briefest possible time. But even if we believe that in this progress the interests of the governed are alone to be considered, these must be affected by the way in which emancipation

is carried through. The peoples have much to gain from an orderly transfer of power in which the constitution and the economy are taken over in such a way as to preserve their structure from damage and to ensure their unbroken development. The governments' skilled services, technical and educational, built up over decades, must not be torn up by the roots: the new order must be carefully grafted upon them. These operations are not easy. The transfer of government is a most hazardous process. The state, its economy, and the very boundaries within which they have been built, have been the recent creation of the colonial power. Although Africans in the British eastern and central territories of which we are mainly thinking have been entering the lower ranks of the civil services and of industry there is still an inadequate number of trained, and still more, of experienced persons to conduct all the affairs of a modern state. We are not now considering whether their apprenticeship could have been begun earlier but what can best be done during the next few years. Each of these years, if good use is made of them, will see an extension of responsibility and also a new and larger generation of men and women coming out of the universities or other educational institutions. It would be a difficult but valuable achievement to persuade nationalist leaders that they have even more to gain from an ordered programme of advance to independence than have their rulers. Nigeria is a favourable example. Large and composite, she will be no easy ship of state to launch into independence, but the two or three years of careful and cooperative preparation by government and people should provide the best possible conditions for the great event next year.

How can such useful cooperation be achieved? We have never forgotten in this Conference that the young nations are made up of individual persons. We should equally remember that governments, even colonial governments, are composed of human beings. And during the period of the transfer of power they are human beings working under very great strain. They have to bring their work, both as a national task and as that of their individual careers, to an unexpectedly early end. They have to cling to their goodwill and high standards of integrity while perhaps they are being criticised, even maligned, both by the people amongst whom they are working and by the world in general. They have to try to guide and also to control the turbulent forces of nationalism. They may have to make grave and instant decisions to preserve law and order. They need encouragement for good acts as well as criticisms for bad ones. The agents of reconciliation should be hard at work making it possible for all those members of the staffs who are irreplaceable to carry on the conduct of the state to the moment of independence and to remain and serve the new government for so long as they are needed. This is a very hard thing to ask of a colonial official and only those with a great sense of vocation will undertake it successfully. There are leading Sudanese today who know how much their country lost by the too sudden exodus of their British officials.

Christians could do much to help towards an ordered and amicable act of emancipation. By so doing they would help not only the new nation but also their churches. These suffer greatly when nationalism becomes embittered or distorted, and may suffer more if independence leads to poverty or disorder. Those who suffer most in the period of rapid change are the thoughtful, educated and often Christian Africans who are torn between the standards of conduct laid down by their faith and their desire to be at one both in mind and in act with their own people at their moment of crisis. And since it is the presence of white colonists which causes the government to delay that surrender of power which it makes more readily where these hostages to the future are not present, it may also be a Christian duty to understand their fears and consider their interests and to act

as a reconciling influence, interpreting the one side to the other. They might thus make it possible for some of these colonists to remain as citizens and to incorporate their wealth both of experience and of capital in the new state.

I may be wrong - it is difficult to generalize even about Britain's remaining African colonies - but I have the impression that British governments are a little bewildered by the support - in some instances the very new support - which the churches are now giving to the forces of nationalism. Only yesterday it seemed that in the sphere of education at least there was a close cooperation in the interests of the peoples. It may well be, especially in some regions, that disagreement between Church and State is inevitable and may be healthy. It is certainly not new as I thought Dr. Kiano suggested in his speech. In Uganda and in Nyasaland, for instance, the churches, whose missionaries went out in the service of the people long before the Europeans state arrived, have certainly not always accepted government views of political affairs. In Kenya from the early nineteen twenties, it was Dr. Oldham, that great but most self-effacing Christian statesman, and the Archbishop of Canterbury, in alliance with Lord Lugard and others in England, and with the churches in the colony, who protested long and effectively against injustice to Africans in matters of labour and land. I interpret the will of this Conference, where, perhaps, we can offer the latest representative evidence of Christian opinion upon our subject, to be wholeheartedly, if only implicitly, in favour of the early independence of colonial peoples. Where members of British governments, and especially, perhaps, senior members - men who have the power to apply the brake excessively, even dangerously - are out of sympathy with this urgency is it not partly our fault? Are not these men of authority somewhat cut off from the influences which move us and the ideas we generate? Power, especially power held over another people, tends to isolate its holders. Some officials live in remote and lonely districts. Do visiting Christians, especially the non-British, call upon governors and their staffs as well as upon their own opposite numbers? Do the churches abroad direct their pastoral care sufficiently to members of governments, and discuss their ideas with them? If it is better for all concerned that colonial rulers should hand over their power under the pressure of ideas rather than of agitation and violence then it is important that the kind of ideas we have generated here, with the help of Africans and also of those who have graduated out of the colonial status, should be shared as widely as possible. I would therefore venture to suggest that not only in the colonies but in the metropolitan countries more contact could be made with officials and also with those who represent industry and settlement. I do not believe that Britain has now any important interest which inhibits her from emancipating her colonies, except as regards the difficult position of European and Asian minorities and the need for bases, and her fears for the economic and political viability of the potential nation itself. Fears and misunderstandings, failure on the part of rulers to recognize the psychological and, indeed, spiritual elements in new nationalism, and on the part of the ruled to understand the genuine doubts and difficulties of the governments - these are the factors which further complicate the already dangerous processes of emancipation. Would it not be possible for the World Council of Churches, as a further stage in the project which has brought us here from all over the world, to plan a conference, perhaps in Britain, which should bring together Christians from these other groups of which I have spoken? These are at least as deeply concerned as ourselves in building constructive relationships at the deepest level of understanding, not only on the eve or the day of independence, but also upon its morrow.